RedBird Word

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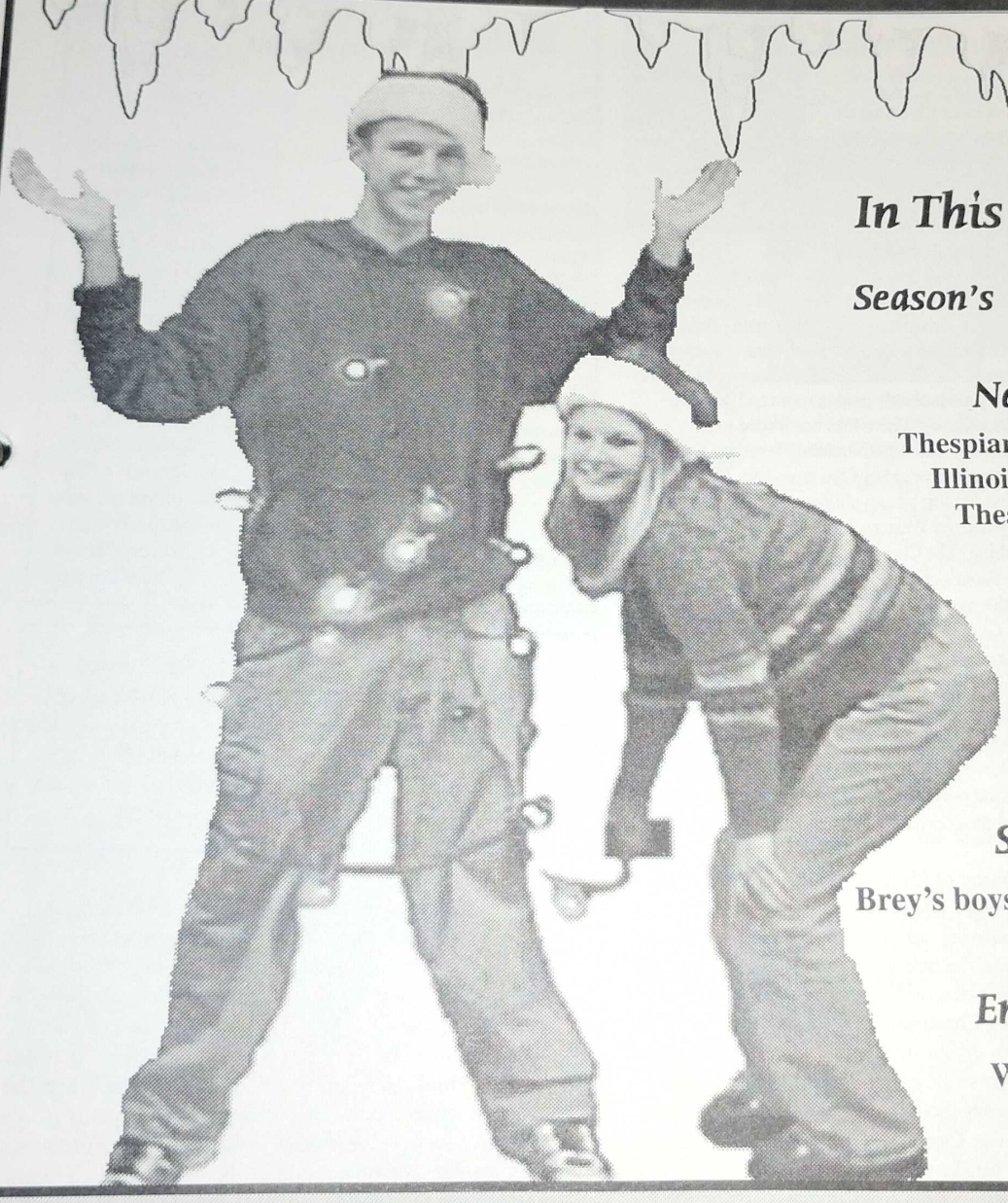

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ALTON HIGH SCHOOL 2200 COLLEGE AVE. ALTON, IL 62002

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Update Christmas- make it politically correct

By Kelly Lappin
Editor-in-Chief

The origins of many Christmas traditions have been forgotten. Some of these traditions seem to be a little outdated and politically incorrect. These days, being politically correct has become an essential part of our society. Our biggest holiday season, however, is full of traditions that are not PC and some that are completely outdated.

For instance, Santa's little "elves" can be closely compared with another practice we Americans look down upon- child labor. Not only are the elves forced to wear those dorky little costumes, but their job relocates them to the North Pole, the absolute worst place to live on the planet. They are probably paid in room and board, which seems very stingy considering where they are forced to live. They slave in the workshop day and night, tirelessly trying to finish the toys for all the children of the world by Christmas Eve. How can we complain about China forcing young children to work long hours for very low wages, when our Western, beloved hero, Santa Clause, is guilty of the same thing? The Christmas story needs to incorporate inalienable rights for Santa's elves.

Additionally, the meaning of the ornaments we put on trees has been forgotten. Germans originated the tradition of hanging glass ball-shaped ornaments on their trees to keep away evil spirits. Now we hang just about everything on our trees, from candy canes, to cheap ornaments children make in art class. Those glass balls can still be spotted occasionally amongst the other clutter on Christmas trees, but few people know why they are there. We should adopt a new shape with a specific purpose that will be found on every tree, so when people look at those ornaments, they know it is there for a reason.

Another discrepancy of Christmas traditions is the thought that we should always have a white Christmas. It may be pretty, but let's face it, we are destroying our own chances of having a white Christmas year after year. The hole in the ozone layer is not getting any smaller. We shouldn't bombard children with Christmas songs about dreaming of a white Christmas, because by the time they have children, snow will be a distant memory. If people want a white Christmas, they should make the environment a bigger priority.

Maybe we as a society should rethink our views about Christmas. If we could just revise Christmas a little, it could truly be the "happy holiday" season we like to pretend it is.

Editor's note: This editorial is satirical and should not be viewed as the serious opinion of RBW staff.

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Our Mission For 2000

Our mission as journalists of the RedBird Word is to bring you, the students, the who, what, when, where, and why of the news. Aside from the facts we will strive to enlighten and entertain. This is a paper for the students, created by the students, so as your voice, help us be heard.

Letters to the Editor
What Do You Think?

The RedBird Word staff wants to hear from you. If you have any questions, comments about a story, or want a refund, let us know. Feel free to drop your letter by Room 401, put it in Mrs. Brave's mailbox in the Main Office, or send an e-mail to the Editor-in-Chief at klappin@journalist.com. Also, clubs and organizations who would like to advertise events or awards can have a club sponsor or member contact us. We'll run an ad for your activity for FREE, just let us know!

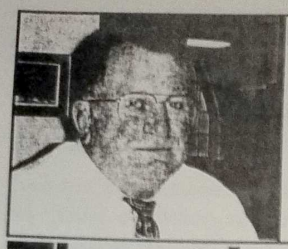
cover photo by Audrey Hinrichs

RBW

December 2000

NEWS

AHS-USA-World



Thespians Get Excited About Festival

And They Are Not Acting

By Alison Hanold

Thespians are, undoubtedly, a bit odd and unpredictable, yet still lovable in a sense. Now imagine being in a room with thousands of loud and screaming Thespians. Sound appealing? Maybe not to the average person, but extremely appealing to many AHS Thespians.

The Illinois High School Theatre Festival is an annual festival for high school Thespians in Illinois to come together for a weekend to learn more about the craft of theatre. This festival is in its twenty-sixth year and is the largest high school theatre festival in the country. There are about 100 workshops available such as acting, auditioning, improvisation, clowning, puppetry, juggling and stage combat.

"We've been going to Theatre Fest for many years now, and it has continually been an extremely enjoyable experience for all," said Mr. Waters, sponsoring teacher and chaperone. "It gives the students many rare opportunities to learn and discover things about theatre they may never have had the chance to by just participating in plays," Waters added.

Along with workshops, there are many opportunities to view what other theatre students are working on around the state. Schools may bring a full length or showcase show to be performed throughout the festival. There is also the All-State musical, which is performed by students who have auditioned from all over Illinois. This year's musical is "West Side Story".

Senior students have the opportunity to audition for many colleges at the festival. Around 16 college representatives will gather in a room, and the senior can audition with one monologue for all of the judges in hopes of getting scholarships.

The theme for this year's Theatre Fest is "2001-Theatre Odyssey: The Epic Journey Continues." The students will be gone January 4 through 6, and will be traveling to the University of Illinois, where the festival is held. The Thespian attendants this year are: senior Erin McCann, senior Stephen Heintz, junior Alison Hanold, senior Ben Harris, junior Kari Oglesby, junior Julie Strassmann, senior Julie Pisarek, senior Amber Smith, and junior Adam Betz.

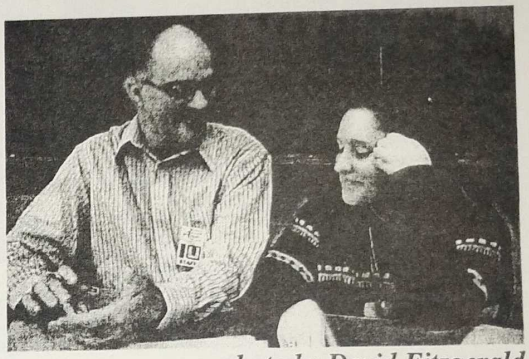


photo by David Fitzgerald

Mr. Waters reminds Erin McCann to bring in her money for Theatre Fest.

"Theatre Fest is undoubtedly the best time we get to have all year. It's a great chance to hang out with my best friends and learn about theatre at the same time," said senior Stephen Heintz.

Activities Board Activates For Holidays

By Kendall Neudecker

Student Activities Board is currently preparing to host a number of winter activities this December.

photo by Missy Minton

Sophomores Josh Adams and Lisa Beck work together to write a letter for the Student Activities Board.

They are planning to tell Christmas stories to elementary students on December 15 at West Elementary and Lewis and Clark Elementary. The Elementary students are to be read books such as "The Night Before Christmas", "A Christmas Carol" and "How The Grinch Stole Christmas." Chairman of the elementary school committee Amber Cook said, "I'm very excited that Activities Board is doing this project. Through it we hope to influence the children to become leaders by reading to them this year."

Activities Board will participate in the Adopt-a-Family program again this year. They are sharing their family with the Student Senate. Activities Board will provide the gifts and Student Senate will provide the food for the family's holiday celebration.

Senior Class President Jason Porter said, "I look forward to helping out the less fortunate families during this time of year so that they too can have a happy holiday."

Snow Bound, the Christmas dance, is also being sponsored by the Activities Board. The theme of the dance is centered around snow time fun. Activities Board Adviser Glenna Pickett said, "I feel that it would add a sense of joy to each student's holiday by ending it with an organized event."

Student Senate Volunteers

By Erin DeBlass

Members of the Student Senate are working towards bridging the gap between generations. Members have begun volunteering at Eunice Smith Nursing Home, visiting with the residents.

The Adopt-a-Grandparent Program enables Alton High School students to interact with citizens from a past generation. It also allows residents of the home to interact with the younger generation, and gives them someone to visit with regularly.

In the program, each member is paired with a resident who does not have many visitors. The pair will then hopefully create a bond.

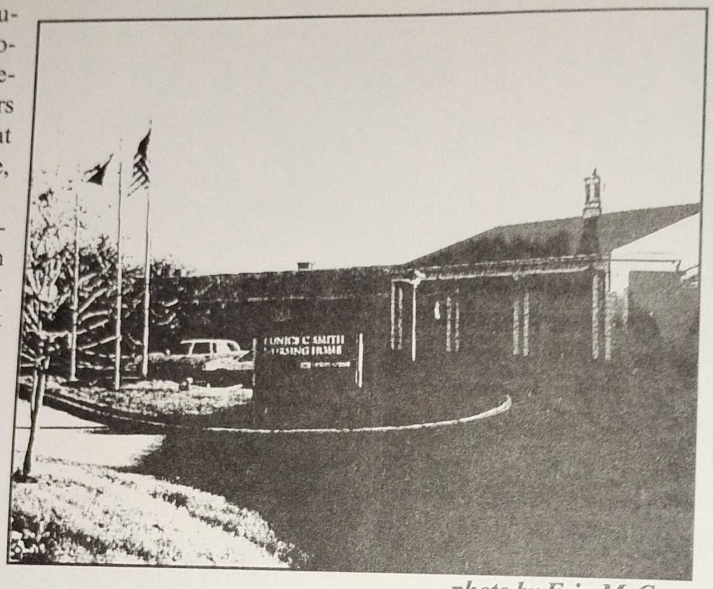


photo by Erin McCann

Eunice Smith Nursing Home on College Avenue

In addition to the one-on-one interaction, Student Senate also conducts group activities. Students will host annual Bingo games, a favorite pastime of the residents. Members also created Christmas cards for each of the 64 residents. In the spring, Senate hopes to put on a "Senior Prom."

"I'm very excited about doing this," said Rachel Bryant, Sophomore Class Vice President and Adopt-a-Grandparent chairperson. "I hope to have other school organizations participate in the future."

Currently, Student Senate is the only Alton High organization volunteering at Eunice Smith.

First Night Kicks Off the New Year

By Andrea Dubree

This New Years Eve, Celebration of Christmas will be sponsoring it's sixth annual First Night Celebration at Lewis and Clark College. First Night will take place from 7p.m. through midnight on New Years Eve, and will cost $8 at the door or $6 in advance.

"First Night is a great family oriented activity. There are many different activities for all ages," said Mike Ferguson, a steering committee member.

The festivities will include the Bell Choir, roaming clowns, local bands, interactive art contests, games, painting, and an ice sculpting contest.

The festival will also include its second annual improvisation competition. Several local high schools and community groups will be competing in the contest. Two participating teams are from Alton High.

First Night will kick off the New Year with a fireworks finale and a Ball Drop identical to that of Times Square in New York City.

First Night is looking for 250-300 volunteer to work two hour shifts on New Years Eve. Volunteers will be given tee-shirts and free admittance for the entire night. Parties interested in volunteering should call 467-2244.

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Naughty or Nice: Sit on Santa's Lap

By Erin McCann
Managing Editor

During the Christmas season millions of children around the world wait in line to see one of Santa Claus's many helpers. The children of the Alton area have an advantage that most are unaware of; Alton is the off-season home of the real Santa Claus.

Claus, who often goes by the alias Reid Childers, has had the occupation of Saint Nick for about 40 years. He lives on a small farm just outside of Alton.

"It (being Santa Claus) is a lot of fun," said Claus. "You meet all kinds of people, and very seldom do you meet a grouchy person."

Sometimes a grumpy person does come along. On one occasion, a nine year old boy attempted to set Claus's beard on fire. "He pulled a cigarette lighter out of his pocket," said Claus, "And being that my beard is real, I didn't want him to set my beard on fire, because that was going to set the rest of me on fire."

Most of Claus's experiences have been rewarding ones. On one occasion, he had the opportunity to talk with a six year old girl who had just had surgery for a brain tumor. The little girl asked for a Cabbage Patch Kid, which at the time was very popular and hard to come by. Claus managed to find a set of Cabbage Patch Twins. He later spoke with the neighbor of the little girl, who had heard her screaming with excitement from the house next door on Christmas morning.

One challenge that Claus faces is keeping up with what is popular in children's toys. Technological advances have made acquiring the hot toy of the season a little more difficult. "They used to ask for sleds and electric trains, but they're forgotten now," said Claus. "Now it's computers and of course the action toys."

Another challenge that Claus deals with is keeping a close watch on the children of the world over the course of the year. Claus has talked to children at many parties, malls, hospitals, and Christmas celebrations over the years. One year on Christmas Eve, Claus was visiting with children at Jamestown Mall. As 5 p.m. approached, about 150 children were still waiting in line to see him. In spite of the line, the mall had to close for the holidays and Claus was escorted to the mall offices by security.

Claus also owns his own business. "Santa's Workshop" is an arts and crafts booth that participates in many shows such as the one held in Alton High's Annex Building in December. Claus and his wife travel to many different areas of the country with their workshop, giving them the opportunity to watch over many children.

"Most of them know that there is a good possibility that Santa Claus is sitting there in disguise, because I don't wear my red suit," said Claus. "I have a lot of little ones that come up to me and say 'Hi. How are you?' and 'I've been good.' They always like to see Santa Claus no matter where it is at."

Make the Season Bright

By Jama Fabry
Features Editor

Millions of twinkling lights guide the way through a magical winter wonderland right here in Alton. After hours of stringing lights and constructing over 100 displays the ninth annual "Celebration of Christmas" light show opened its gates on November 17.

This spectacular holiday event features Santa's House, where pictures and Easter Seals ornaments can be purchased, a petting zoo and nearly a dozen Christmas trees which have been decorated by local organizations. Weekend carriage rides are also offered for cold-loving adventurists, but be sure to bundle up.

Senior Ashley Budde, daughter of the display's coordinator Bob Budde, said, "We've had a really great turn-out this year, especially volunteers. It's so rewarding to see little kids get excited about something so simple. The tunnel of lights seems to be everyone's favorite part of the tour."

So load up the family and head out to Rock Springs Park to experience this spirited tradition. The cost is only seven dollars per car or one dollar per person on buses and trolleys. The display is open to the public Monday through Friday from 6-9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 5-9 p.m. A portion of the proceeds benefits Behavioral Health Alternatives and the Otter Creek Historical Society.

Calling All Artists

By Amy Porter
Cover Story Editor

Imagine being able to get your art, photography, short stories and poetry published for free. What's the catch? It has to be submitted as soon as possible.

AHS's art and literary magazine is beginning to come together. Amy Porter and Stacey Garrison have been announced as the Calliope writing and art editors and are very excited to be faced with this challenging opportunity.

The theme for this year's Calliope is 'Insanity.' "There are many interpretations of Insanity," said Garrison. "Seeing what other students come up with will be interesting."

Calliope is beginning to gain public reognition by name. This adds to the staff's confidence that this will be the best Calliope ever. "We've got endless ideas. Now we need things to put on the pages," said Garrison.

Whether or not works will be used is based on quality. "In past years, only the editor's friends got their works published," said Garrison. "This year we want a variety of art from everyone. I know a dozen students that write and draw in their spare time, but are afraid to submit work."

The staff has already begun accepting art and writing for review. For guidelines see Porter, Garrison, or Mrs. Brave in room 401.

Beat the Holiday Blues

By Missy Minton
Photographer
All information provided by Scholastic News Service

Many Americans say that the holiday season is somewhat stressful. The number one cause is money, with people worried about whether or not they will have enough for the Christmas and Haunukkah holidays.

However, other researchers say that the cause of depression experienced in the later part of the year may have something to do with the changing of the seasons.

Humans react to the seasons just as animals do. Most find that their patterns change during the winter. Some eat and sleep more in the winter and dislike the dark mornings and short days. However, for some the symptoms can be severe enough to disrupt thier daily lives and cause a considerable amount of stress. These people are suffering from Severe Affective Disorder (SAD).

Around 2 percent of Americans suffer from SAD. About 10 percent experience milder symptoms.

Some of the symptoms include overeating, depression, and lethargy. Teens and young adults suffering from SAD usually show behavioral problems that may begin as early as December and last until April.

Researchers believe that the main cause of SAD the lack of bright light in the winter months. They have proved that bright light makes a difference in a person's brain chemistry. Some SAD sufferers find light treatment to be effective in reducing their symptoms.

For those who suffer from mild symptoms of the holiday or winter blues, we have provided some simple ways to stay stress free.

Ease Headaches -Apply ice immediately. If ice does not ease the pain, try putting a heating pad on your neck. This speeds up the blood flow, which loosens your muscles.

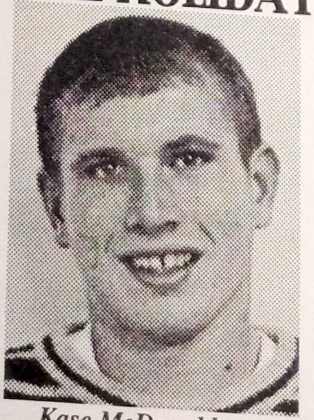
Drink Lots of Fluids -Suffering from dizziness can be just as bad as headaches. When dizziness sets in the best thing to do is to drink a glass of water. Stay away from foods such as meat, yogurt, corn, bagels, crackers and chips.

Get Rid of Bad Breath - For some, stress begins with bad breath. Especially if you are on a date! One way to fight the problem is to eat a lot of fruit. Oranges have an acid that destroys oderous enzymes that develop when a mouth is dry. Don't like oranges? Make sure to brush your tongue as well as your teeth. Mouthwashes with zinc are most effective. Also, be sure to eat breakfast and include veggies in your meal.

Releive Back Pain -Back pain is often caused by poor posture. Good posture is when your ears, shoulders, and hips are aligned. 90 percent of back pain can be treated successfully without professional help.

"WHAT DO YOU DO TO FEEL STRESS FREE DURING THE HOLIDAY AND WINTER MONTHS?"

photos by Missy Minton



Kase McDonald, senior
"Play indoor sports and get it geeked."

Kory Heitzig, junior
"I hang out with friends and have snowball fights."

Salina Frakes, sophomore
"I read a book and drink something warm."

Jill Stafford, freshman
"I try to relax with my friends as much as I can."

RBW

Entertainment

music, movies and more!

December 2000

Yuletide Tunes Hit Stores This Season

By Nik Kern

Although the holiday classic songs sung by Bing Crosby and Nat King Cole are nice, most teenagers want something else when it comes to Christmas music. Many artists have released or re-released Christmas albums to help make the holiday a bit more cheery for their teenage fans.

"When it gets to be this time of year, I enjoy listening to Christmas music," said fr musiceshman Jared Ruckman. "I puts me in the festive mood."

A CD titled *Platinum Christmas* has been released featuring such artists as Britney Spears, Monica, Santana, N*SYNC and Toni Braxton singing favorite holiday tunes. CDNow, an internet site selling CDs, cassettes and movies, claims that *Platinum Christmas* is the collection that you have been waiting for.

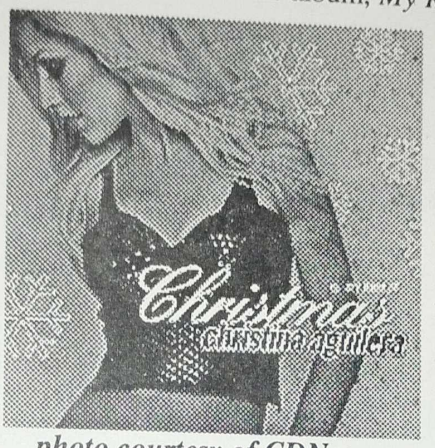


photo courtesy of CDNow.com
Christina Aguilera's Christmas release

"*Platinum* is a fabulous CD," said junior Emily Jones. "It really puts me in the holiday mood when I listen to it."

Teen sensation Christina Aguilera released her new Christmas album, *My Kind of Christmas*. Aguilera's CD features favorite Christmas classics mixed with urban beats and pop arrangements.

Musical artists are not the only ones releasing holiday hits this year. TV shows are also releasing their favorite Yuletide tunes. Popular TV talk show host Rosie O'Donnell released *Another Rosie Christmas*. O'Donnell sings her favorite Christmas songs and duets with music superstars such as Faith Hill, Destiny's Child, Smashmouth, Dixie Chicks and Ricky Martin.

A Very Merry Christmas features Ally McBeal's music ambassador Vonda Shepard with a guest appearance by Macy Gray. This year's Christmas releases are sure to make any house or holiday party a bit more festive.

Dixie Chicks: Pregnant and Still Performing

By Nichole Vondrasek

Dixie Chicks' lead singer Natalie Maines and her husband, actor Adrian Pasdar, are expecting their first child in April. The couple was married after the Chicks' sold-out concert in Las Vegas June 23 and just one month later found out they would be starting a family.

This, however, has not put a stop to the Dixie Chicks' busy touring schedule and television appearances. "I was tired the first three months," said Maines of her pregnancy. "I'm fine now.... I've heard the heartbeat. Just one, thank God!"

Maines feels her singing and performing have not changed since carrying the baby, but she has been making some clothing and dancing changes. "I'm sure when I start getting a big belly, I won't be doing all the sexy moves."

photo courtesy of RollingStone.com
The Dixie Chicks' Natalie Maines is pregnant

After performing at the 34th Annual Country Music Awards on October 4, the Dixie Chicks continued touring and performed a concert in St. Louis on October 27. "The concert was awesome," said junior Chelsea Witcher. "You can just tell they have a great time performing, and everyone in the crowd gets caught up in it."

The Chicks recently played their first primetime concert special November 20 on NBC. They will continue touring until December when they will spend some time off for Natalie to adjust to motherhood.

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December 17
Salusa Secundus
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December 25-28
The Urge
Mississippi Nights

December 31
The Schwag
Cicero's

Movie Calendar

December 20
Thirteen Days

December 25
All the Pretty Horses

Now Available on Video

The Cell
Gone in 60 Seconds
Loser
Road Trip
Scary Movie
Shaft

Winter Brings Death to AHS

By Ben Harris

Winter is here again, and it's time for someone else to die. A group of people band together to find out "who done it" in the winter production of *Death by Arrangement*.

The play takes place in modern day London. Evan MacKenzie, the collectively hated murder victim, is found dead by means of poison. Acquaintances of the late party are brought to the home of Charles Christopher (played by freshman Adam Tucker) to be interrogated as potential suspects of the crime.

"It has an interesting plot to it," said junior Elaine Myers (playing the part of Alison Hume). "I think I'm going to enjoy this one."

The selected cast members reach a large variety of talents, from newcomers to experienced thespians. Julie Pisarek, Kendall Neudecker, Ben Harris, Julie Strassman, Elaine Myers, Jeremy Myers, Adam Betz and Alison Hanold, members of Thespian Troupe 126, appear with beginning actors Chris Ayala, Chris Stahl, Brandon Krepel and Adam Tucker.

"This is my first performance," said Tucker. "I'd say it's a great experience." *Death by Arrangement* will be held in the school auditorium on January 26 and 27. See cast members or Mr. Waters for ticket or other information.

'Unbreakable' Makes a Clean Break

By Andy Herrin

The new Bruce Willis movie, "Unbreakable," seems to have an unbreakable plot. As soon as it starts to come together, it changes. As soon as the movie ends, however, it all makes sense.

"Unbreakable" is the newest film written by M. Knight Shyamalan. Shyamalan is the writer and director of the 1999 hit, "The Sixth Sense," also starring Willis. With the success of "The Sixth Sense," it is no surprise Willis and Shyamalan teamed up again.

photo courtesy of Yahoo! movies
Bruce Willis as David Dunn in Touchstone's Unbreakable

"'Unbreakable' is a really unique idea, I thought it was cool," said freshman Eric Pope.

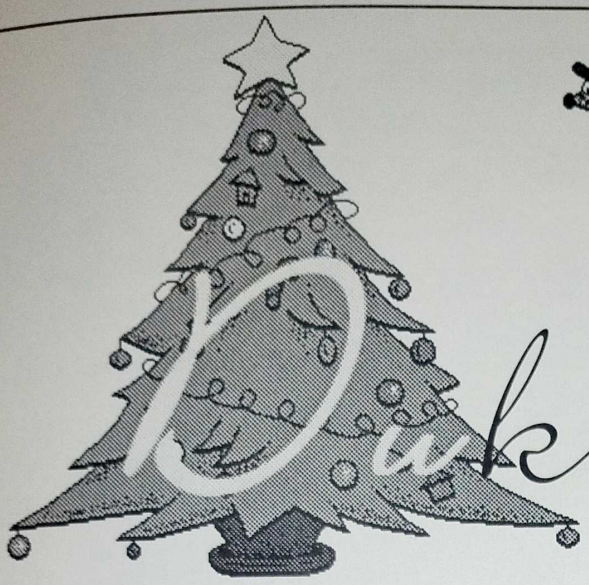
The basic theme for "Unbreakable" is hard to explain without giving away the ending. The main plot is about Willis' character, David Dunn who is riding a train that derails. He is the sole survivor of the wreck and he has no cuts or scrapes. As the movie progresses, Dunn begins to realize he can not be harmed.

"I think 'Unbreakable' is one of the better movies I've seen this year," sophomore Kenny Ross said.

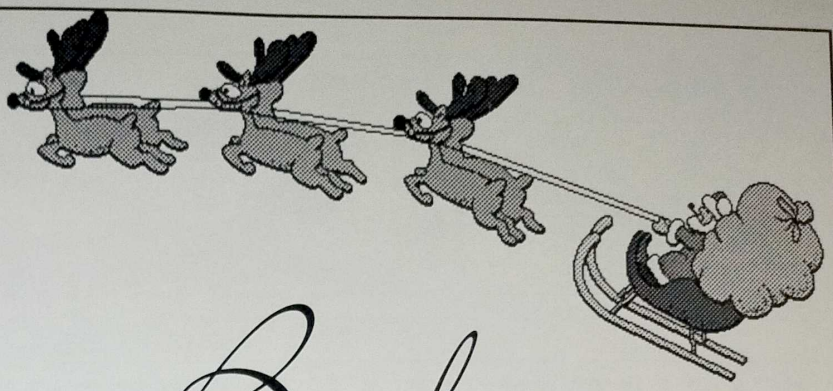
As the movie goes on, it starts to give little hints about the ending. Little puzzle-like pieces that bring the film together are presented. By the end of the movie, it seems pretty obvious what has been going on.

"The little hints made the movie cool," said senior Eric Durbin.

With "Unbreakable" and "The Sixth Sense" being so popular, it is obvious that Willis and Shyamalan are a good team. Shyamalan follows in the style of the "The Sixth Sense" in creating another movie that tests your observance.



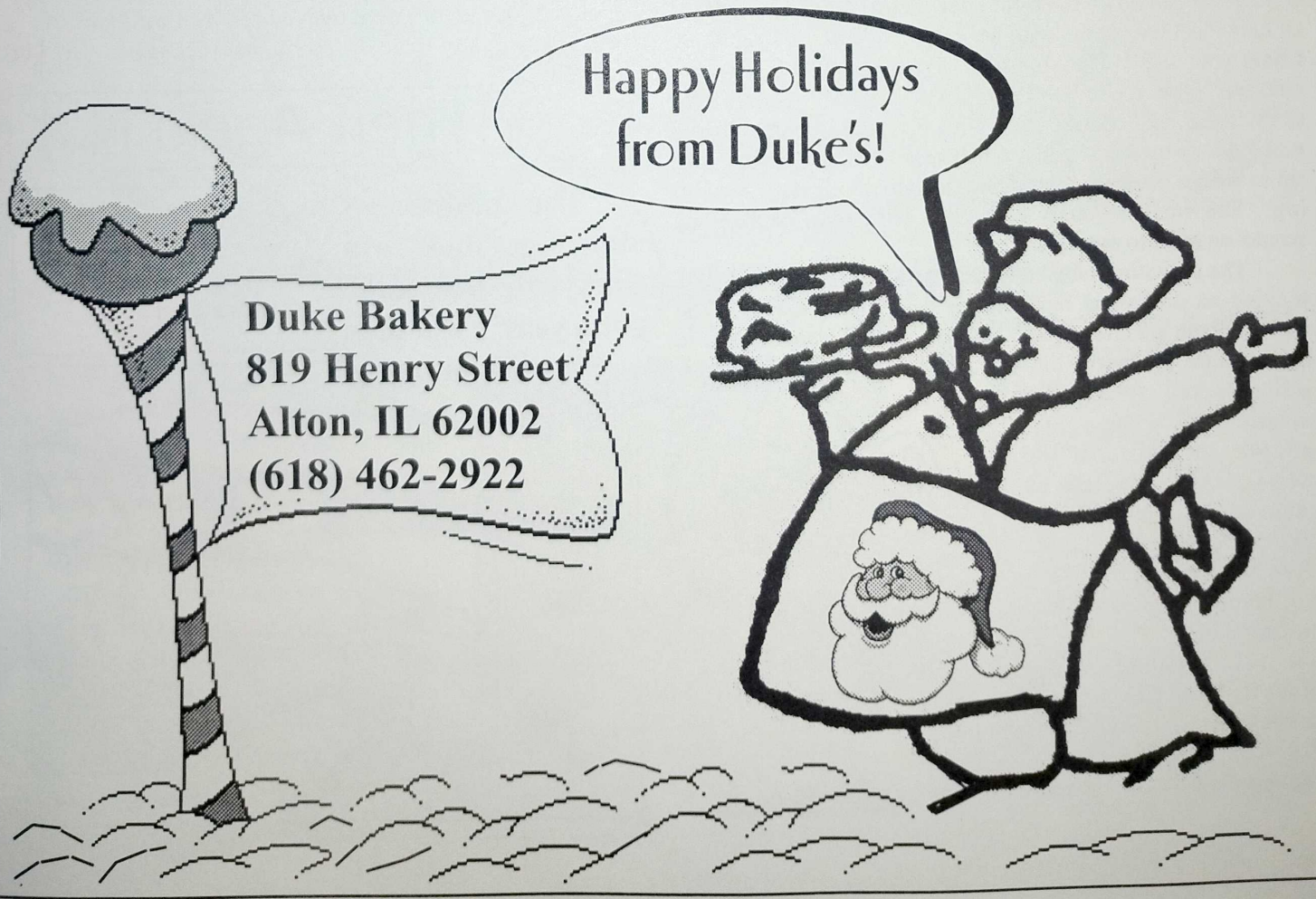
Duke Bakery



'Twas the night before Christmas, and what Santa found,

Was that we had left him the best cookies around!

Christmas cookies from Duke's... A Holly Jolly treat!



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This is all satire. Calm down.

RACIST CEREAL OPPRESSES RABBITS

By Stephen Heintz
Humor Editor

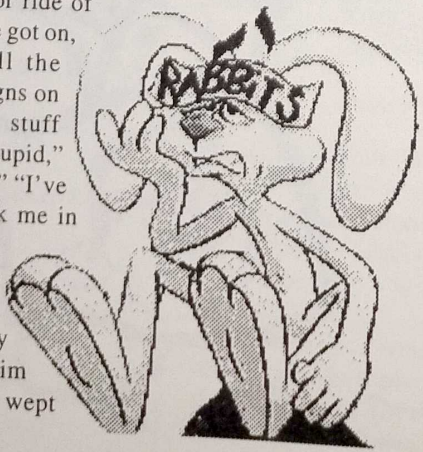
The Trix Rabbit. The saddest, most pathetic figure of our time. For his entire existence, he has been put down, but most embarassingly, he has been put down by SMALL CHILDREN. Every day of his life.

Well, guess what, you Communists up there at General Mills? This happens to be AMERICA. In AMERICA we believe in equal rights for all races, creeds *and species*. Your constant hate-mongering towards rabbits has to end. And I'm just the man to end it. Oh yeah. Be afraid.

Well, I've never been one to sit idly by and allow the end of equal rights to take place. One time a Nazi tried to tell my dog she couldn't eat cat food, so I pulled out some kung-fu and blew up his head with my fist. I'm an animal lover, what can I say?

Anyhow, taking action, I walked up to General Mills HQ and kicked down the front door. A little blond receptionist lady tried to fool me with her fake kindness, asking "May I help you, sir?" Thinking cleverly, I said "Yeah, you can help me. Help me by DYING! HAHAHAA!!" Then I tried to do some neat Matrix stuff with my guns; I remembered that I didn't own any guns, much less have any on me, so I shot a rubber band at her head and ran into the elevator screaming. She was obviously paralyzed with fear, or else she would've tried to stop me.

The elevator almost mocked me with its cheesy music, playing an orchestral rendition of the "Thong Song." The elevator ride seemed almost endless, until I remembered to hit the little numbered button. After that, I began the most action-packed elevator ride of my whole life. People got on, people got off. All the while, I stuck little signs on their backs that said stuff like "kick me," "I'm stupid," "yes, that smell is me," "I've got herpes," and "kick me in the throat."



Then I got off on some floor and grabbed a nerdy looking guy by the collar and threw him up against a wall. He wept and begged me to spare him, so I gave him an atomic wedgie and sent him waddling off on his merry way. Then I grabbed some ugly guy and threw HIM up against the wall. He sang like a bird. Then I made him stop, and tell me what I wanted to know. After that, he figuratively sang like a bird.

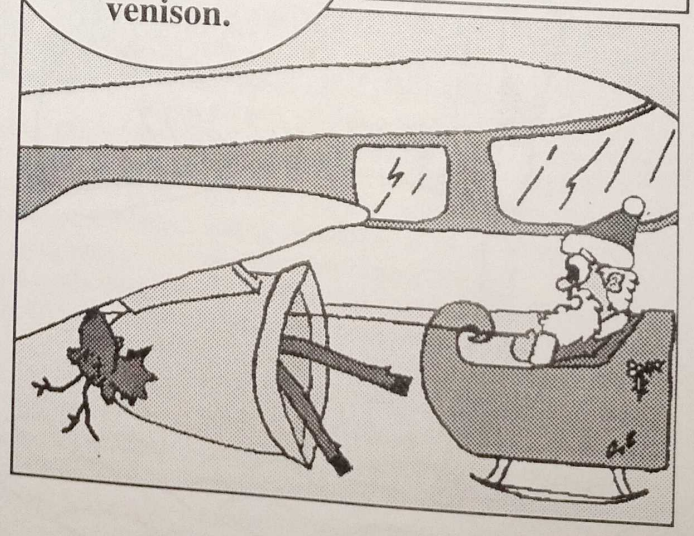
Apparently, the whole reason that General Mills oppresses the Trix Rabbit is that he is, in actuality, a russian spy named Vladimir Rabbitinskoff that they caught back during the cold war by using their elite squad of seven-year-old kids. Instead of turning him over to the United States government, they gave him a serum that made him crave Trix brand cereal. Ever since then, the elite little kids have been focusing their efforts on keeping this master of disguise's efforts focused entirely on cereal.

That's not really what he said, but I didn't quite pay enough attention, and I had to get to Chuck E. Cheeses in time for lunch, and to see those amazing dancing robots. I let the ugly guy go, then I went out and had the time of my life. I guess I never really freed the rabbit, but such is life. He'll be fine. Maybe.

Then Again Not

The children didn't get their toys that year. But Santa got a year's worth of venison.

art by Amy Porter
Cover Story Editor
concept by Stephen Heintz
Humor Editor



Brey's Boys Shooting at Winning Season

By Stephen Nash

With the season underway, Alton High School basketball coach Mike Brey was pleased with his Redbirds' performance in their first tournament of the season. The season opened as usual with the seventh annual Redbird Tip Off Classic.

The tournament included the Alton Redbirds, Mt. Vernon Rams, Cahokia Commanches, Jerseyville Panthers, Granite City Warriors and the Springfield Southeast Spartans. It is a round robin tournament, which means each team plays every team in the tournament.

Alton and Springfield Southeast both had 4-0 records going into the last day of the tournament, which means they would both play in the championship game.

The score was tight the whole game. The lead bounced back and forth the whole game.

Finally the Redbirds ended up running out of time losing the lead with a fourth quarter surge by the Spartans winning 75-68.

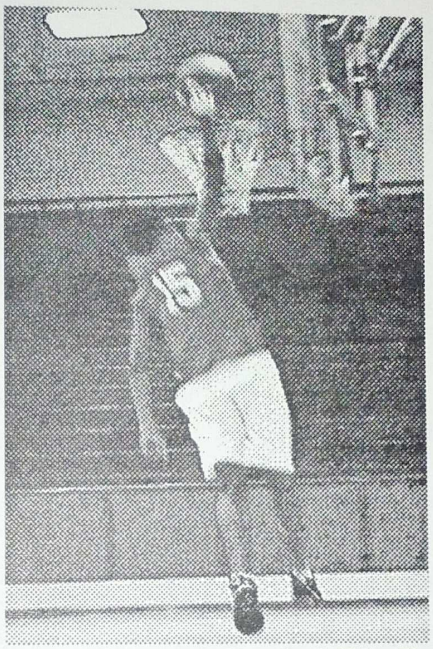


photo by Jeff Saville

Mike Stockard dunks the ball at practice.

"We battled every minute of every game in this tournament," said Coach Brey. "We just ran out of gas the last quarter of the last game."

"We should have won that game," said senior Keion Lacey. "We just had too many mental errors."

Senior Blaine Everage said, "So what we lost, that was just a tune up for the season."

The regular starters for Alton in the tournament were 6'0 senior Keion Lacey, 5'11 senior Blaine Everage, 5'11 senior Jovan Smith, 6'3 senior Ryan Everage, and 6'6 senior Mike Stockard.

The Redbirds have started the season 4-2 losing their next contest in the Second Annual Fullcourt Classic in Edwardsville 46-45 to the DeSmet Spartans who finished second in the whole state of Missouri last year.

The boys are now gearing up for the Southwestern Conference where they will play 17 of their next 21 games.

Wrestling Pinning Southwestern Conference

By Derek Allen
Senior Editor

The Redbirds' wrestling team opened their 2000 season with a loss to Springfield on November 21. The Redbirds quickly recovered winning their next three matches, including a win over conference rival Collinsville on November 22.

The Redbirds have been led this year by senior co-captains Sean Dooley and Matt Elliott. Alton wrestlers Luke Warner, Brian Huber, Sean Dooley and Matt Elliott are all undefeated after their first four matches. The varsity team also includes 189 pound senior Mike Martin and junior Luke Warner who has also stepped up lately to lead the team in which he wrestles in the 215 pound weight division.

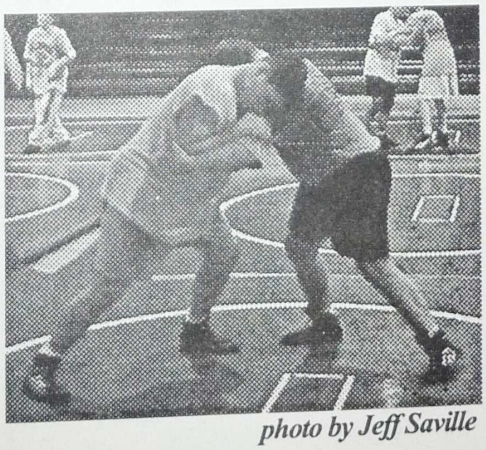


photo by Jeff Saville

Senior Brian Huber and junior Luke Warner wrestling at practice.

The Redbirds will have to contend with the perennial conference powerhouse Granite City in order to have a shot at winning the conference championship. "If we can get by Edwardsville and Granite City, we should win the conference," said Dooley.

The only thing that might hold the Redbirds back is their youth, losing more than half of the starters from last year's team. "We have a few holes in our lineup, but that's just something we're going to have to overcome," said Warner.

Girls Have Trouble on the Road

By Stephanie Wright
Senior Editor

The girls' basketball team has not got off to the best start this season. Their record is now 3-9 after their loss to the Belleville East Lancers.

The girls have not won a game on the road yet this year. Their three wins were against the Waterloo Bulldogs, Cahokia Commanches and the Marquette Explorers in their tip-off classic at the beginning of the season.

"We have a good team chemistry this year. Our attitudes have changed and we are more disciplined," said senior Christianne Beck. "Winning on the road isn't the easiest thing. You really have a big disadvantage because you are not used to the gym and most of the calls usually don't go your way."

The team came close to winning their first game on the road on November 28 against Belleville West. They lost to the Maroons 62-48.

The girls have twelve games at home this season out of 26.

For the past two year in a row the team has not won a conference game.

"We are in a tough conference and every year we have a tough season," said Beck.

The team needs to win two more games to improve their record from last year's, 4-23.

"I think that we will accomplish a lot more this season than we have in the past. We put more effort into playing and we play as a team." said Beck.

The girls are coached by Head Coach Terry Mitchell and Assistant Coach Cathy Snipes.

Java Lounge

When: Janurary 19, 2001
7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Where: First Baptist Church of Alton
1145 College Ave.
Alton, Illinois 62002

(The Java Lounge will be in the basement of the church.)

Wait 30 Minutes After Eating

By Stephanie Wright
Senior Editor

The Girls' Swim and Dive team did not have much time to prepare for their season this year.

The team was very young this year with only four swimmers: junior Mary Scyoc, sophomores Kelli Knight, Susan Scyoc and Allison York.

Senior Katie Willings was not able to compete this season after her knee surgery this summer.

" It was awful not being able to compete my senior year, but I still traveled with the team," said Willings.

On November 11 the team competed at Springfield High. This was their only competition this season.

Mary Scyoc placed twelfth in the 100 yard backstroke.

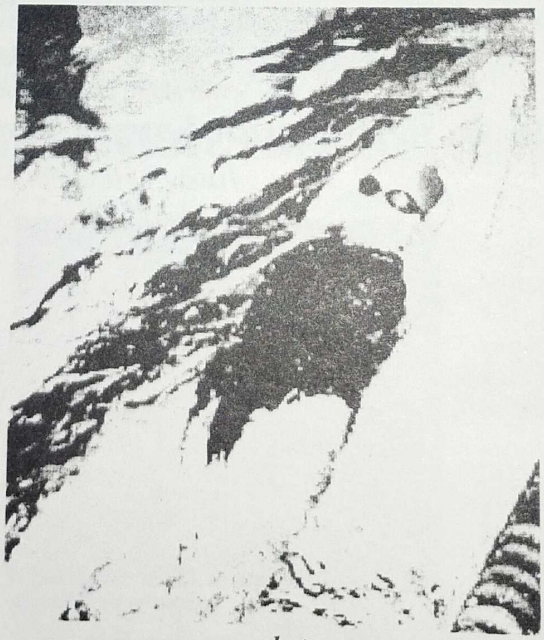


photo courtesy of Tatler
Senior Katie Willings practicing her backstroke before her relay.

The Boys' Swim and Dive team has been practicing all fall at Metro Sports.

The boys' team will compete in Springfield in February.

Competing will be: seniors Michael Crammond and Joe Scyoc, junior Scott Helfrich, sophomore Wayne Zumwalt, and hopefully, freshman David Hinkle will compete in diving.

"If they take first place in Springfield, they will automatically go on to the state competition in Chicago," said Coach Connie Coleman.

The boys' have competed in the state competition where they have done well in years past.